

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01

NIC-01 IO-10 DPW-01 /092 W

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R 311815Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6323

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, VS

SUBJECT: ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE CONNECTED WITH SECOND  
ANNIVERSARY OF PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM

REF: USDEL JEC PARIS 02435

SUMMARY: FRENCH COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS MADE A RATHER  
HALF-HEARTED ATTEMPT TO USE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
PARIS AGREEMENT TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR HANOI AND TO CRITI-  
CIZE THE U.S. THEY WERE BASICALLY NOT ABLE APPRECIABLY  
TO INCREASE THE LOW LEVEL OF INTEREST IN INDOCHINA OF  
THE FRENCH PUBLIC, WHICH IS CONCERNED WITH MORE PRESSING  
DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS. THE ANNIVERSARY  
THEREFORE PASSED RATHER QUIETLY WITH NO IMPORTANT  
DEMONSTRATIONS, ONLY A QUIET PROCESSION OF DELEGATIONS  
CARRYING MESSAGES WITH PREDICTABLE SLOGANS DRAWN FROM  
STANDARD DRV PROPAGANDA. EVEN THE "NATIONAL REPRESENTA-  
TIVES" WHO ATTEMPTED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO SEE THE PRIME  
MINISTER AND A SMALLER NUMBER WHO CALLED ON AN EMBASSY  
OFFICER WERE GENERALLY FIGURES ASSOCIATED WITH INDOCHINA  
PROTESTS AND NOT IMPORTANT NATIONAL FIGURES IN THE  
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LEFTIST PARTY AND UNION ORGANIZATIONS. PRESS COVERAGE

WAS ALSO RATHER LIGHT. IN SUM, ANNIVERSARY SHOWED THE FRENCH PUBLIC'S REDUCED INTEREST IN INDOCHINA EVENTS, BUT THE CONTINUATION OF VIEWPOINTS SOMEWHAT HOSTILE TO U.S. AND GVN POSITIONS.

1. PRINCIPAL EVENTS: THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM PASSED RATHER QUIETLY IN FRANCE DESPITE COMMUNIST EFFORTS TO MOBILIZE PUBLIC RESPONSE. THE OPENING GUN WAS A JANUARY 16 TELEVISION PROGRAM FEATURING A CONDENSED VERSION OF JANE FONDA'S FILM ON NORTH VIETNAM AND A DISCUSSION IN WHICH SHE CLEARLY ALIENATED HER THREE FELLOW PARTICIPANTS, BUT WAS THE DOMINANT VOICE IN FLUENT IF NOT ALWAYS CORRECT FRENCH. PRG AND GVN HELD PRESS CONFERENCES JANUARY 24 (REFTEL). SOUTH VIETNAMESE EXILE GROUPS MET JANUARY 26 AND PRODUCED DECLARATION (SEPTTEL); FRENCH NON-COMMUNIST PRESS HIGHLIGHTED PRESENCE OF FORMER GVN LEADER GENERAL NGUYEN KHANH, BUT HUMANITE IGNORED HIM IN ITS REPORTING. ON JANUARY 27 REPRESENTATIVES OF 53 COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS TRIED TO CALL ON PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC; THEY WERE NOT RECEIVED AND HAD TO CONTENT THEMSELVES WITH LEAVING A LETTER CRITICIZING FRENCH GOVERNMENT FOR FAVORING THE GVN AND CALLING FOR RECOGNITION OF PRG. JANUARY 27 WAS ALSO OCCASION FOR PRINCIPAL FRENCH PRESS AND TELEVISION COVERAGE OF INDOCHINA. ON JANUARY 28 IN RESPONSE TO THE CAMPAIGN OF 53 COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS, 42 "DELEGATIONS" COMPOSED GENERALLY OF TWO TO THREE PERSONS VISITED THE EMBASSY TO LEAVE LETTERS OR RESOLUTIONS ADDRESSED TO THE AMBASSADOR OR EMBASSY. APPROXIMATELY AT COB 5 OFFICERS OF THE 53 MOVEMENTS PRINCIPALLY INVOLVED IN THE "STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE FOR THE PEOPLES OF INDOCHINA" CAME TO THE EMBASSY TO PRESENT VIEWS ORALLY. IN ADDITION, EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED TO DATE 72 TELEGRAMS AND 57 LETTERS FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF FRANCE INCLUDING MANY WITH NUMEROUS SIGNATORIES. IN PROVINCES, WHERE SAME "53 ORGANIZATIONS" WERE TO PRESENT SIMILAR PROTEST LETTERS TO LOCAL US CONSULATES, THERE WAS A LIGHT TURN OUT: SIX "DELEGATIONS" AT MARSEILLE, THREE AT BORDEAUX, ONE AT NICE, AND 13 AT LYON PLUS TWO SUPPORTING US AID TO GKR.

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2. PRINCIPAL POINTS OF PROTEST: THE CABLES, WHICH WERE THE MOST SUCCINCT, GENERALLY CALLED ON THE U.S. TO STOP ITS INTERVENTION IN INDOCHINA AND TO RESPECT THE PARIS AGREEMENTS. U.S. AID TO GVN WAS FREQUENTLY SPECIFIED AS PRINCIPAL "INTERVENTION". SOME LETTERS CALLED FOR U.S. PRESSURES ON GVN TO OBTAIN RELEASE OF "200,000 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SNV" AND GVN RESPECT FOR

DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES. THE LETTERS AND RESOLUTIONS  
PRESENTED BY THE DELEGATIONS GENERALLY EXPRESSED THE  
SAME THEMES IN EXTENSO. THERE WAS OCCASIONAL ELABORATION  
SUCH AS THE ARGUMENT THAT WITHOUT U.S. MILITARY ECONOMIC  
AND POLITICAL SUPPORT THE GVN WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO  
EXECUTE A POLICY WHICH VIOLATES THE PARIS AGREEMENT,  
SUCH AS BOMBARDMENTS OF OR ATTACKS AGAINST THE

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R 311815Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6324

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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PRG ZONES. SOME MORE CAREFULLY DRAFTED LETTERS  
REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO U.S. AND GVN VIOLATIONS OF  
SPECIFIC ARTICLES OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY  
U.S. VIOLATION OF ARTICLES 1 AND 4.

3. ORAL PROTESTS: THE 5 PERSONS WHO CAME TO THE  
EMBASSY TO MAKE AN ORAL PRESENTATION WERE THE FOLLOWING:  
YVES ARCADIAS (MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPT. OF  
CFDT);  
THEO RONCO (POLICY COMMITTEE OF PCF);  
JEAN SCHAEFFER (CONFEDERAL SECRETARY CGT);

MICHEL LANGIGNON (MOVEMENT DE LA PAIX);  
LOUIS ASTRE (FEDERATION D'EDUCATION NATIONAL, FEN).  
THEY APOLOGIZED FOR THE ABSENCE OF THEIR PARTI  
SOCIALISTE (PS) AND PARTI SOCIALISTE UNIFIE (PSU)  
COLLEAGUES, WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED THE FIRST FOUR (PLUS A  
DIFFERENT REP OF THE FEN) ON THEIR JANUARY 27 VISIT TO  
FRENCH PRIME MINISTER JACQUES CHIRAC. THE GROUP MADE  
BASICALLY THE SAME POINTS AS THOSE IN THE LETTERS, BUT  
THEY PUT SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON FREEING POLITICAL PRISON-  
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ERS. THEY EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE UNITED STATES,  
WHOSE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES INCLUDED FREEDOM OF BELIEF,  
SHOULD SUPPORT A GVN POLICY OF IMPRISONMENT OF POLITICAL  
PRISONERS UNDER FRIGHTFUL CONDITIONS. ASTRE (FEN) SPOKE  
EXTENSIVELY ON THIS SUBJECT AND ASKED FOR U.S. SUPPORT  
FOR AN IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PRISON PROBLEM  
AND PRISON CONDITIONS IN BOTH PRG AND GVN ZONES.  
LANGIGNON POINTED TO RELATIVELY SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION IN  
LAOS AND, WITHOUT SPECIFYING DETAILS, RECOMMENDED  
SIMILAR SOLUTION FOR SVN AND CAMBODIA. ANOTHER  
STRESSED THE U.S. FAILURE TO PROVIDE AID AS PROVIDED  
FOR IN ARTICLE 21. EMBOFF NOTED THAT U.S. OFFICIAL  
STATEMENTS HAD REFUTED THE NEARLY IDENTICAL VIEWS WHEN  
PRESENTED BY DRV, BOTH AS TO SUBSTANCE AND INTERPRETA-  
TION. THEY WERE AS AWARE OF GVN AND U.S. POSITIONS AS  
WE WERE OF THEIRS. SPECIFIC POINTS WERE CHALLENGED SUCH  
AS CLAIMS CONCERNING "POLITICAL PRISONERS". THE  
COMMUNIST "DELEGATION" ALSO BASICALLY AGREED THAT DRV  
WOULD NOT PERMIT IN SVN A SOLUTION ALONG THE LINES OF  
THAT IN LAOS AND THAT CAMBODIA LACKED SOME OF THE  
FAVORABLE ELEMENTS WHICH RESULTED IN LAO AGREEMENTS.  
IT WAS CLEAR THAT COMMUNISTS DID NOT WISH A REAL DEBATE  
BUT MERELY TO HAVE IT ON RECORD THAT THE DRV VIEWS HAD  
BEEN EXPRESSED AT THE EMBASSY.

4. PRESS COVERAGE: FRENCH PRESS COVERAGE WAS  
RELATIVELY LIGHT. EVEN HUMANITE GAVE RATHER LIMITED  
SPACE TO THE ANNIVERSARY. DESPITE A SLIGHT UPSWING IN  
NEWS ABOUT VIETNAM AT THE TIME OF THE ANNIVERSARY,  
MANY NEWSPAPERS DID NOT CARRY AN EDITORIAL OR SPECIAL  
ARTICLE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT.  
PRESTIGIOUS, GENERALLY CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER LE  
FIGARO, ON THE OTHER HAND, CARRIED A SPECIAL ARTICLE  
BYLINED BY FORMER AFP CORRESPONDENT IN INDOCHINA MAX  
COFFAIT. COFFAIT GAVE A VERY BIASED ACCOUNT OF THE  
COMPLAINTS OF THE TWO SIDES, INCLUDING DRV "DISAPPOINT-  
MENT" AT LACK OF U.S. "REPARATIONS" AS REQUIRED BY  
ARTICLE 21. HE ENDED WITH THE VIEW THAT THE U.S. WOULD  
SOON DECIDE WHETHER THE CURRENT SITUATION COULD BE

MAINTAINED IN SVN AND IF SO, IT WOULD RETAIN THIEU; IF  
THE SITUATION DETERIORATED, THE U.S. WOULD REPLACE  
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THIEU WITH SOMEONE BETTER ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE WITH THE  
OTHER SIDE. FRENCH TELEVISION ALSO COVERED ANNIVERSARY

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6325

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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UNEVENLY. NEWS ON CHANNEL ONE CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH  
PRESIDENT THIEU FOR WHICH A REPORTER HAD BEEN SENT  
SPECIALLY TO SAIGON. IN CONTRAST WITH THIS MORE OBJEC-  
TIVE COVERAGE, NEWS ON CHANNEL TWO CAME CLOSER TO THE  
DRV LINE. ANNOUNCER EVEN CLAIMED THAT CANADA HAD HAD  
TO BE REPLACED BY IRAN IN THE ICCS BECAUSE CANADA HAD  
BEEN TOO FAVORABLE TO THE GVN.

5. COMMENT: LOW VOLUME OF CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATIVE LACK OF VIRULENCE -- PARTICULARLY IN ORAL CONFRONTATION -- INDICATES THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO MOBILIZE A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF FRENCH, EVEN CONVINCED COMMUNISTS, ON THE VIETNAM ISSUE. THE FACT THAT THE FIVE WHO CAME TO THE EMBASSY ARE RELATIVELY MINOR FIGURES IN PCF AND TRADE UNIONS SUGGESTS THAT COMMUNISTS DECIDED TO GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF CALLING AT THE MATIGNON AND AT THE EMBASSY WITHOUT TROTting OUT THEIR "BIG GUNS". LOW VOLUME OF PRESS COVERAGE -- PARTICULARLY COMPARED TO COVERAGE OF SADAT VISIT AND OTHER NEAR EAST NEWS -- SIMILARLY INDICATES WANING INTEREST. ONE SHOULD NOTE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOWEVER, THAT SUCH COVERAGE AS WAS GIVEN DID HAVE A TENDENCY TO ACCEPT MANY DRV/PRG CLAIMS AND INTERPRETATIONS AND THAT THIS LACK OF OBJECTIVITY -- INCLUDING WILLFUL ERRORS -- IS ACCEPTED COMPLACENTLY IN FRANCE. VIETNAM MAY NO LONGER BE VERY OFTEN FRONT PAGE MATERIAL, BUT THE VIEW FROM THE EIFFEL TOWER REMAINS VERY FAR FROM OUR OWN.  
RUSH

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
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**Disposition Event:**  
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